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CALIFORNIA FIRST LADY SHARON DAVIS KICKS OFF THE RENOVATION OF HISTORIC STATE PARK

Rehabilitation of Historic Leland Stanford Mansion Is Officially Underway

SACRAMENTO – First Lady of California Sharon Davis today helped kick off a two-year, \$11 million rehabilitation project to restore the 145-year-old historic Leland Stanford Mansion to active public service. The mansion has been closed since April 2000 for badly needed repairs.

“This is an exciting time for us here today in Sacramento and for all Californians,” Mrs. Davis said. “To preserve such a jewel from the 19th century and rehabilitate it for use in the 21st century is something in which we should all take great pride. I am excited to watch the progress and I look forward to its grand reopening in 2004.”

This new “hammer and nails” phase is the result of an effective public/private partnership between the Leland Stanford Mansion Foundation and the State of California’s Department of Parks and Recreation. The partners have shared their vision with contributors and sponsors to raise the funds necessary to carry out the rehabilitation project. They also collaborated on the project design to facilitate California’s need for an international protocol center and a new public tour program in the Capital City.

“This is a good example of how the private sector can help the state to capitalize on opportunities that strengthen our state’s economy, as well as its educational opportunities,” said Susan Peters McCuen, chair of the Leland Stanford Mansion Foundation.

The Leland Stanford Mansion State Historic Park will be carefully rehabilitated to be reflective of the Stanford family’s life in this home in the late 1800s as well as functional by today’s standards. Highlights of the project include:

- Rebuilding and restoring the mansion’s exterior with a dozen 10-foot-tall, highly decorated spires and antique gas light posts to illuminate the elaborate front entry and staircase;
- Painstakingly reproducing the exceptional natural wood paneling in the once-elaborately decorated main dining hall; and
- Restoring the intricate crown molding and the magnificent marble fireplace in the billiard parlor.

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STANFORD MANSION 222

Built in 1857, the Leland Stanford Mansion is a 19,000-square-foot Italianate mansion with four floors and 27 rooms. The mansion served as home and office to two California Civil War-era governors, Leland Stanford and Fredrick Low, as well as the office for Governor Henry Haight until the Capitol building was completed. In addition, the mansion served as an orphanage for nearly 90 years before being purchased by the state in 1978.

Once the initial rehabilitation is complete, the mansion, designated a California State Historic Park in 1983, will offer regularly scheduled public tours in addition to its official function to serve as a center for international protocol events and meetings hosted by the governor and legislative leaders.

“When it reopens, Stanford Mansion will offer the public the unique opportunity to explore the history of our state government in a structure where modern history is also being made,” said Ruth Coleman, Acting Director of California State Parks.

Rehabilitation of the Leland Stanford Mansion State Historic Park is scheduled for completion in winter 2004.

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